



EVERYONE HAS A STORY TO TELL: COVERING THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE KATRINA

Subject: Journalism | Current: 2010 | Grade: 9-12

Day: 1-3 of 3

1 Purpose

To familiarize students with the ongoing news coverage of a natural disaster that continues long after the first day.

2 Duration of Lesson

Three days. Day one will be an overview of Hurricane Katrina, the devastation of the entire Gulf Coast, the loss of life and property, the schools that had to be closed down and families sent away to neighboring states, the resources available to residents. During Day 2, students will participate in online interviews with survivors of Hurricane Katrina who may now be in college as identified by their high school counselors. Local Red Cross personnel will come in and speak to the students of their part in helping during the catastrophe. Students will also log onto www.highschooljournalism.org and look at the archives to see how student newspapers covered the disaster in late August of 2005, during one of the five deadliest hurricane seasons in U.S. recorded history. On Day 3, students will map out five possible natural disasters, 15 possible story angles (three for each disaster), and 30 possible sources or resources for stories (10 for each disaster). Students will also identify three different assistance programs on the local, state and national levels that could be contacted for help for each of the three disasters identified. (9 total)

3 Additional Topics

Story mapping for numerous story angles; identifying community needs, where to go for help and assistance, how communities can be united through media coverage. Creation of a Timeline for coverage.



4 Objectives

To teach students that continued coverage of natural disasters and major events can help readers learn how and where to go for help.

To reach out to assist others in needs.

5 Standards & Benchmarks

SOCIAL STUDIES

WORLD GEOGRAPHY

Students will acquire a framework for thinking geographically about the environment and society. They will analyze ways in which humans affect and are affected by their physical environment and the changes that occur in the meaning, distribution and importance of resources.

WG.5

Analyze the possible effect of a natural disaster on the local community and devise plans to cope with a disaster so as to minimize or mitigate its effects.

WG.5.4

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY OF THE WORLD

Students will examine the physical and human geographic factors associated with examples of how humans interact with the environment, such as deforestation, natural hazards and the spread of diseases, and the regional and global consequences of these interactions.

GHW.9

Use maps to identify regions in the world where particular natural disasters occur frequently. Analyze how the physical and human environments in these regions have been modified over time in response to environmental threats. Give examples of how international efforts bring aid to these regions and assess the success of these efforts.

GHW.9.1

Example: Japan (earthquakes): building reinforced skyscrapers, training for emergency in a disciplined society; United States (hurricanes): the response in Florida and Louisiana, government aid, flood-prone areas in urban environment; Indian Ocean (earthquakes, tsunamis): lack of warning systems in the third world countries, worldwide relief efforts, foreign aid; Colombia (volcanoes): mud-flows, government response in remote areas of the world; Pakistan (earthquakes): remote areas, lack of building codes, terrorist activity; and China (floods): deadly floods on the Hwang Ho River.



ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

Students formulate thoughtful judgments about oral communication. They deliver focused and coherent presentations of their own that convey clear and distinct perspectives and solid reasoning. Students deliver polished formal and extemporaneous presentations that combine the traditional speech strategies of narration, exposition, persuasion, and description. They use gestures, tone, and vocabulary appropriate to the audience and purpose. Students use the same Standard English conventions for oral speech that they use in their writing.

9.7

Apply appropriate interviewing techniques:

- prepare and ask relevant questions.
- make notes of responses.
- use language that conveys maturity, sensitivity, and respect.
- respond correctly and effectively to questions.
- demonstrate knowledge of the subject or organization.
- compile and report responses.
- evaluate the effectiveness of the interview. (Core Standard)

9.7.16

Students discuss ideas for writing with other writers. They write coherent and focused essays that show a well-defined point of view and tightly reasoned argument. Students progress through the stages of the writing process (prewriting, writing, editing, and revising).

10.4

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Students write coherent and focused texts that show a well-defined point of view and tightly reasoned argument. The writing demonstrates students' progression through the stages of the writing process (prewriting, writing, editing, and revising).

11.4



Research Process and Technology: Develop presentations using clear research questions and creative and critical research strategies, such as conducting field studies, interviews, and experiments; researching oral histories; and using Internet sources. (Core Standard)

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12.4.7

Indiana Department of Education. (n.d.). Indiana Standards and Resources: Social Studies: Geography and History of the World; English/Language Arts. Retrieved from <http://dc.doe.in.gov/Standards/AcademicStandards/StandardSearch.aspx>

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Vocabulary

----- The following terms are used in this lesson:

- **Natural disaster** – A catastrophic natural event that causes destruction to the environment.
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency** – A federal agency that offers support and relief to residents of the United States in the event of a natural disaster.
- **American Red Cross** – A humanitarian organization that provides assistance and aid in disaster response, and provides training and education for emergency preparedness.
- **Hurricane Categories** – A rating system used by meteorologists to classify and prepare for the intensity of the storm.
- **Mapping** – The process of tracking hurricanes.
- **Angle of Hurricane Attack** – The right front quadrant of a hurricane is the strongest section of a hurricane and will create the most damage when striking land at a perpendicular angle.
- **Timeline** – The timeline of a hurricane, also known as its lifecycle, begins as a tropical depression, advances to a tropical storm, and eventually develops into a hurricane.



- **Coverage** – The tracking and reporting of a story to the public.
- **Perspective** – A mental point of view or outlook in understanding and judging an event.
- **Viewpoints** – A position from which an event is observed.
- **Follow-up** – To maintain contact in order to either take further action or to monitor the effects of a particular event.
- **Backgrounding** – The act of creating conditions that form the setting within something is created.
- **Sources** – A person or document that supplies or creates information.
- **Resources** – Something that can be used for support or help.
- **Department of Homeland Security** – A department within the United States federal government responsible for protecting Americans' lives from terrorist attacks and responding to national emergencies.

7 Materials

Poster Board and markers, computer lab with internet access

8 Additional Resources

Local Red Cross representative who worked during Hurricane Katrina to speak with class. Access to distance learning or internet capabilities to interview students who were displaced to different schools during the clean-up efforts.

9 Procedures & Methods

Research of Hurricane Katrina, 2005; review of media coverage immediately following the disaster, two weeks later, one month later, one year later. Online review of student newspaper coverage of displaced students in the archives of the American Society of Newspaper Editors' Web site, <http://www.highschooljournalism.org>. Discussion and demonstration of story mapping to identify multiple sources and resources for a variety of viewpoints and perspectives and a better rounded story.

A. Introduction

Students will watch 3 different broadcast accounts during Hurricane Katrina's first days. Students will go online to read accounts of the disaster immediately following the devastation of the Gulf Coast, two weeks later, one month later, and one year later.



B. Development

How did the coverage differ or expand following the actual disaster? What or whose stories needed to be told? Why did these stories need to be told? What was the response time for local and government agencies? What could have hindered a more timely response? What needs still exist today?

C. Practice

Students get a first-hand account from a primary source when students talk with southern students who actually lived during the hurricane and were displaced to other high schools during the extensive clean-up and aftermath. How could these students have been helped through the media? Were any of them helped through media accounts? If so, how?

D. Independent Practice

Students brainstorm together and then work out a time line for coverage of a disaster like Hurricane Katrina. Which media should be utilized, when, and how? Whose stories needed to be told? Students will create a story map that identifies the potential sources, resources, story topics, and emergency help possibilities in covering a similar disaster. How will this information help the readers' understanding and abilities to assist?

E. Accommodations (Differentiated Instruction)

Students who have visual, mobile or hearing impairments may need adaptive computer software to assist with using the computer and accessing the websites for information. Students who need extra scaffolding may need a graphic organizer to use information gathering session during the video, particularly when gathering information from 3 different broadcasts.

F. Checking For Understanding

Students will be graded on their Timeline – 25 pts. and on their Story Mapping exercise – 35 pts. Students will identify possible resources to contact for help to share with readers – 15 pts. Students will also become involved in conversations with students over the internet or distance learning set up through their questions and answers. These conversations will be observed and taped by the teacher/evaluator.



G. Closure

The Department of Homeland Security has several career paths for students who are interested in not only covering natural disasters through the media, but in the assistance of citizens involved in these disasters. For a sampling of job availability, location and salaries, students should log onto USAJOBS. State Homeland Security and Emergency Services, and the Department of Public Safety have several job opportunities listed according to the state of residence. Also, FEMA (<http://fema.gov/about/contact/regions.shtm>) lists "Employment Opportunities in Emergency Management".

The DHS also offers Fellowships to students in the nation's best graduate programs. Those who qualify and are invited will be able to provide direct assistance to top policymakers throughout the Department. Fellows work with professionals in areas such as "Policy Development," "Strategic Planning," "Emergency Preparedness," "Public Affairs" "Intelligence and Analysis." The DHS seek applicants who have keen analytical skills, a demonstrated ability to write well and the judgment and discretion needed to operate in a highly visible environment. The candidates who are selected as Honors Fellows will serve for two years and may have the opportunity to convert to a permanent position at DHS. <http://www.spa.ucla.edu/careers>

10 Evaluation

Teacher will evaluate participation with online interview of students involved in the disaster of four years ago. Students will also be graded on a timeline of the event's media coverage and how the stories evolved to different topics over time. The students will also be graded on their story mapping angles, sources, resources and identification of disaster assistance.

11 Teacher Reflection

To be completed by the teacher after teaching the lesson.



12 Resources & Meda

- <http://www.highschooljournalism.org>
- <http://www.spa.ucla.edu//careers>
- <http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/Search.aspx?>
- http://www.dhs.gov/files/resources/editorial_0306.shtm
- State Homeland Security and Emergency Services
- FEMA Regional Offices
- State and Area Tactical Interoperable Communications Scorecards
- State Fire Points of Contact (USFA)
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Poster Board and markers, computer lab with internet access

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Rubric Assignment: Planning Coverage

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Best - Sources are varied and include interviewees from multiple perspectives. All points of view are examined. Efforts have been made to identify lesser sources, not just the obvious ones.

Better - There are multiple contacts identified, representing both sides. However, regular citizens who have been impacted by the disaster have been overlooked.

Sub Par - All sides have not been considered. The obvious contacts have been identified. The ensuing story will be obvious and not a thorough story for the readers.

RESOURCES

Best - Varied resources have been consulted that provide insight on the history of the area and of similar storms. Resources could include, but are not limited to, internet, Web sites, weather station personnel, atlas, topical maps, newspaper archives, periodical searches, local aid agencies including Homeland Security and the Red Cross. Heresay stories are verified by primary sources.

Better - Many resources have been consulted to get background information to assist with the formation of questions to use during the interview. You could have been a bit more imaginative, however, to research in more depth, using more imagination.

Sub Par - A few obvious resources have been checked and probably most are internet-based. You do not understand the depth of the catastrophe well enough to write insightful questions for meaningful interviews.

STORY ANGLES

Best - You have developed several stories that will tell several sides of the story; the people whose homes and businesses were damaged, the rebuilding efforts, the emergency personnel, the forecasters, the city leadership, the Red Cross, Homeland Security, animal shelters and advocates, hospitals, supplies, the history of storms in the area, the emotional and mental states of residents, the future and what it will hold.



Better –You have several good ideas for a main story and some sidebars. You will tell several parts of the story, yet there are still more to cover. Go back to the drawing board and figure out whose stories you have failed to tell that are important to the entire, truthful recounting.

Sub Par –You have identified the obvious story. But the obvious story isn't always the most truthful story. Everything is not black and white, but multiple shades of gray. Reflect how you would feel if the catastrophe happened to you. Who would be impacted in addition to the obvious victims?

COMMUNITY ACTION

Best –You have tirelessly identified not only local emergency personnel, but state and national organizations. You have researched FEMA, the Red Cross and Homeland Security. You have included churches and philanthropic organizations. You have the information to include in a story that would help others know how to assist, where to go, where to send money to legitimate organizations.

Better - You have a fairly wide range of ways that the community can help. You probably need to expand your research to include not only local, but state and national organizations. A high school newspaper is a real publication and you have the same contacts available as do members of the adult press.

Sub Par - Come on! You have identified the obvious way to help, but you need to talk to experts and expand your research to be of real service to the community. What you write will make a difference.